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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [illegible] DATE 12/24/81
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S E C R E T SAIGON 5024

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: STATE 32427

1. TRAN VAN CHIEU, VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ON TRUONG DINH DZU TICKET, ODL EMBOFFS SEPT 6 THAT FIVE PRESIDENTIAL LISTS WILL PARTICIPATE IN PRESS CONFERENCE SCHEDULE DOR MORNING SEPT 7. JOINING DZU WILL BE HA THUC KY, PHAN KHAC SUU, NGUYEN HOA HIEP, AND VU HONG KHANH. TRAN VAN HUONG AND HOANG CO BINH "MAY" TAKE PART BUT THISIS NOT CERTAIN. [redacted] TOLD EMBOFF AFTERNOON SEPT 6 THAT HUONG AGREES "IN PRINCIPLE" WITH DZU ON THE PRESS CONFERENCE, BUT

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[redacted] SAID HE WAS "NOT SURE" WHETHER OR NOT HUONG WILL BE REPRESENTEED AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE. [redacted] THAT HUONG IS STILL AT VUNG TAU AND HE DOES NOT KNOW WHEN HUONG PLANS TO RETURN TO SAIGON.)

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2. ACCORDING TO CHIEU, THE PURPOSE OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE TO EXPOSE TO THE WORLD AND THE PEOPLE OF VIET NAM THE EVIDENCE THAT THE ELECTION WAS RIGGED. HE SAID THAT A FORMAL COMPLAINT WILL THEN BE FILED WITH THE ASSEMBLY ON SEPTEMBER 8. EMBOFFS STRESSED POINT THAT THERE ARE LEGAL AVENUES FOR COMPLAINTS AND THESE LEGAL PROCEDURES SHOUD BE USED.

3. CHIEU SAID IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION THAT HE AND [redacted] WILL NOT REPT NOT USE ANY ILLEGAL MEANS SUCH AS DEMONSTRATIONS OR VIOLENCE. HE REPEATED THIS TWICE HE SAID THAT IF THE ASSEMBLY FAILS TO SET ASIDE THE ELECTION "BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID", [redacted] AND HE WILL ORGANIZE AN OPPOSITION FRONT TO STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY. THISFRONT WILL USE ONLY LEGAL MEANS AND THEY "WILL BE LIKE THE REPUBLICAN PARTY WHEN THE DEMOCRATS ARE IN POWER IN THE US".

4. COMMENTING ON THE POSSIBILITY OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE DEFEATED CANDIDATES, CHIEU SAID THAT THIS DEPENDS ON THE GOOD WILL OF THE GOVERNMENT. PRIME MINISTER KY

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IS "VERY HARD"BUT THIEU IS "MORE FLEXIBLE". IF THE GOVERNMENT SHOWS GOOD WILL, CHIEU AND DZU WILL COOPERATE WITH IT.

5. ASKED ABOUT REPORTS THAT THE VIET CONG VOTED FOR THE DZU TICKE, CHIEU SAID THAT HE THINKS THIS IS TRUE. HE OBSERVED THAT THE VIET CONG ARE "VERY TIRED" AND LOOKING FOR A WAY OUT.

THE DZU TICKE WAS FOREMOST IN URGING PEACE, SO IT WAS NATURAL FOR THE VIET CONG TO TURN TO THEM. ASKED IF THIS MEANT THAT IT WAS A POLICY OF THE VIET CONG TO SUPPORT THE DZU TICKET OR ONLY THE RESULT OF THE ACTIONS OF INDIVUDIAL VIET CONG WHO ARE "TIRED", CHIEU SAID THAT HE BELIEVES IT WAS VIET CONG "POLICY". HOWEVER HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT MUCH OF THE VOTE FOR DZU CAME FROM THE VIET CONG.

6. EMBOFF COMMENTED THAT THE UNDERSTOOD DZU HAD SAID DURING THE CAMPAIGN THAT THE VIET CONG ARE NOT FOR THE MOST PART COMMUNISTS. CHIEU SAID THIS STATEMENT WAS "ONLY A TACTIC". BY SAYING THAT THE VC ARE NOT REALLY COMMUNISTS, THE

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GOVERNMENT COULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE VC TO COME BACK TO THE GOVERNMENT SIDE. IF DZU WERE PRESIDENT HE WOULD TAKE THIS TACK IN ORDER TO INCREASE DEFECTIONS FROM THE VIET CONG.

7. CHIEU SAID THAT HE AND DZU ARE BACKING 30 CANDIDATES

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FOR THE LOWER HOUSE. THESE INCLUDE CANDIDATES IN TAY NINH, HAU NGHIA, ZAND OTHER AREAS WHERE WE ARE STRONG".

8. AS EMBOFFS WERE ABOUT TO LEAVE, CHIEU OBSERVED THAT HE IS AFRAID THE AN QUANG BUDDHIST FACTION WILL TRY TO USE THE STATEMENTS AND POSITIONS OF THE DZU FRONT TO GENERATE PUBLIC UNREST. HE SAID THAT HE AND DZU WOULD NOT CALL ON THE PEOPLE TO SHOW THEIR DISPLEASURE IN ANY VIOLENT WAY BECAUSE TO DO SO WOULD ONLY HELP THE VIET CONG. HOWEVER THE AN QUANG FACTION CANNOTIBE COUNTED ON TO SHOW SIMILAR RESTRAINT. ASKED IF DZU HAD AN QUANG SUPPORT, CHIEU SAID NO.

9. [redacted] FURTHER INFO RE DZU'S COMMENTS (EFTEL) AND SOME OF HIS VIEWS ON WHAT HE BELIEVES DZU MAY BE UP TO:

A) [redacted] BELIVES THAT DZU POSSIBLY IN COORDINATION WITH THE AN QUANG BUDDHISTS, IS SEEKING TO USE THE INTERNATIC PRESS AS A PRIMARY MEANS OF IMPLANTING DOUBT CONCERNING ELECTIONS ON AS WIDESPREAD A BASIS AS POSSIBLE. HE TH IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE SE PRESS CONFERENCE, DZU AND THOSE GOING ALONG WITH HIM STAGE DEMONSTRATIONS AND POSSIBLY EVEN RESORT TO ILL

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B) DZU CLAIMS THAT INCLUDING THE 7,900 PAID CADRE HE HAD WORKING FOR HIM, HE HAS A TOTAL ELECTION ORGANIZATION OF 10,000 PE[illegible] HE CLAIMS THE SUPPORT OF NGUEYEN LUONG CHAU OF THE PH[illegible]O TU AN SECT OF THE HOA HAO WHICH, HE SAYS, CONTROLS [illegible] PROVINCES. HIS RUNNING MATE, TRAN VAN CHIEU,

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WAS FORMERLY A MAJOR IN TRINH MINH THE'S CA DAI ORGANIZATION, AND DZU CLAIMS TAT HE THUS HAD THE SUPPORT OF ALL OF TRINH MINH THE'S CAO DAI FOLLOWERS. HE ALSO LAIMS HE HAD COMPLETE TAN DAI VIET SUPPORT AND, OF COURSE, THE SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONAL PEOPLES FRONT (UNPF).

C) DZU TOLD [redacted] THE UNPF IS ORGANIZED INTO 4 BLOCS OF 18 CELLS EACH. IT HAS A TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF 200,000 TO 450,000, AND INCLUDES IN ITS MEMBERSHIP THE SOCIALIST PARTY, THE UNION OF FORMER RESISTANCE FIGHTERS, MANY SMALL NATIONALIST PARTIES AND THE CAO DAI. DZU ALSO CLAIMS THE SUPPORT OF A FEW CATHOLICS, SPECIFICALLY PHAT DIEM AND BUI CHU.

D) DZU SAYS THAT TAN DAI VIET LEADER NGUEYEN NGOC HUY WOULD HAVE BEEN HIS PM HAD HE BEEN ELECTED.

E) ACCORDING TO [redacted] TRI QUANG'S ROLE IN ALL THIS IS UNCERTAIN. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER TRI QUANG REALLY WAS PRESENT.

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OR ONLY REPRESENTED, AT THE MEETING ON SEPT 5.

10. COMMENT: A) CHIEU AT LEAST HAS APPARENTLY NOT CLOSED THE DOOR ON COOPERATING WITH THE GOVERNMENT. IF HE MEANS WHAT HE SAYS, HE IS PLANNINGA TRUE OPPOSITION. HE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SPEAK FOR DZU IN THIS RESPECT, HOWEVER. MOREOVER, CHIEU'S COMMENTS ON THE AN QUANG GROUP ARE NOT REASSURING. WHILE AN QUANG MAY NOT HAVE SUPPORTED DZU BEFORE, THEY ARE VERY LIKELY TO TRY TO USE HIM NOW.

B) CHIEU'S FRANK ADMISSION THAT THE DZU TICKET GOT VIET CONG VOTES AS A MATTER OF POLICY IS SURPRISING. IN THIS CONNECTION IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT THE LOCAL PRESS IS PLAYING UP REPORTS FROM U.S. WIRE SERVICES TO THE EFFECT THAT THE DZU SLATE WAS BACKED BY THE VIET CONG. WE ARE STILL LOOKING INTO THE MATTER OF VIET CONG VOTES FOR DZU AND HAVE NOT RPT NOT YET CONCLUDED HOW IMPORTANT THIS FACTOR WAS IN HIS STRONG SHOWING.

C) WE ARE INCLINED TO BE SKEPTICAL ABOUT DZU'S CLAIMS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNITED PEOPLES FRONT AND DO NOT ACCEPT HIS EXAGGERATED CLAIMS IN PARAGRAPH 9. BUNKER

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